

REMARKS

The last Office Action has been carefully considered.

It is noted that Claims 1-2 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) over the U.S. patent to Day.

Claims 15-16 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) over the U.S. patent to Vincent.

Claims 1 and 3-6 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over the U.S. patent to Ronfeldt in view of the patent to Vincent.

Claims 15-18 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over EPO 242,796.

Also, the declaration, the specification and the claims are objected to.

In connection with the Examiner's formal objection, applicants submitted a new declaration.

The specification has been amended in compliance with the Examiner's requirements.

With the present Amendment, Applicant's cancelled the original claims and submitted a new set of Claims 32-56.

Independent Claim 32 combines the features of original Claims 1 and 7.

Claim 33 defines the features which are disclosed at page 6, second paragraph of the specification.

Independent Claim 42 includes all features of the preamble of original Claims 1 and 10, and in addition the characteristic features of original Claim 12, to more clearly define the subject matter of original Claim 10.

Claim 43 is similar to new Claim 33 and is disclosed at page 10, second paragraph.

Independent Claim 47 combines the features of former Claims 15-17 and 19.

Claim 48 is similar to new Claim 43, but depends on Claim 47.

The other dependent claims depend on the corresponding independent Claims 32, 42 and 47.

Independent Claims 32, 42 and 47 are directed to important features dealing with the form-fitting connection of the covering 10 and at least one thread course 8a at the front end of the outer threaded portion (as defined in original Claims 7 and 19). It is respectfully submitted that new independent Claims 32, 42 and 47, together with claims which depend on them, should be considered as allowable.

Original Claims 7-14 and 19-31 were not rejected by the Examiner over the art and therefore it is believed that any further discussions of the references, in particular the patents to Day, Vincent and Ronfeldt should be considered as superfluous.

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application is most respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner require or consider it advisable that the specification, claims and/or drawings be further amended or corrected in formal respects in order to place this case in condition for final allowance, then it is respectfully requested that such amendments or corrections be carried out by Examiner's Amendment, and the case be passed to issue. Alternatively, should the Examiner feel that a personal discussion might be helpful in advancing this case to allowance; he is invited to telephone the undersigned (at 631-549-4700).

Respectfully submitted,
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